

RADAR

The RADAR Network—Communication, Connections, Empowerment

Are you aware that you have immediate access to a substance abuse prevention and treatment resource that extends across state lines and even across oceans? Did you know that housed within your state are centers that belong to a network that blends knowledge and experience from federal, state, community, and international substance abuse professionals? This far-reaching resource is the Regional Alcohol and Drug Awareness Resource (RADAR) Network.

The RADAR Network is sponsored by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's (CSAP) information component, SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI). The Network transforms communication, connections, and empowerment into action through its collaboration, knowledge exchange and transfer, and enthusiastic commitment to reducing the prevalence of substance abuse worldwide.

What is the RADAR Network?

The RADAR Network is a large substance abuse prevention and treatment infrastructure consisting of:

- state clearinghouses
- prevention resource centers
- Department of Education Regional Training Centers and
- national, international, and local organizations supporting substance abuse prevention activities.

To date, even as the RADAR Network continues to grow, there are over 750 active centers. Collaboration and communication are the keys to keeping the national and international prevention community informed about the latest regulations, alcohol and drug use, scientific findings, campaigns and materials, and other resources. With this in mind, the mission of the RADAR Network is to strengthen communication, prevention, and treatment activities among a broad range of organizations to address problems related to substance abuse.

What are the unique services provided by the RADAR Network?

The RADAR Network Centers gather and exchange information responding to both the immediate and the long-term substance abuse prevention needs of their communities, and operate as an integral part of NCADI's distribution system. Through its close relationship with NCADI, the RADAR Network receives a wealth of information, materials, and resources that enable it to provide and coordinate prevention outreach to special populations and regions, while concurrently addressing their own unique needs within the state. They do this by tailoring national resources to the values, beliefs, and cultural norms of their constituencies.

For CSAP, the RADAR Network provides the "eyes and ears" from diverse segments of the substance abuse prevention field. Network members provide invaluable ideas and insights into CSAP's program planning (by proposing and reporting areas of need) and materials development process (through pretesting and other review processes in various stages of materials development). Materials, campaigns, and initiatives that are developed in this collaborative manner have greater local ownership and utility than "handed-down-from-the-top" initiatives. Network Centers agree to be easily accessible channels for the dissemination of new prevention messages, materials, and initiatives.

Overall, the RADAR Network contributes significantly to making prevention work in communities by:

- Reducing overlap between federal and state efforts
- Increasing efficiency in information / knowledge exchange and transfer and
- Creating stronger linkages among federal, state, and community-based prevention efforts.

How is the RADAR Network structured?

The RADAR Network consists of four types of Centers:

- State RADAR Network Centers include clearinghouses and prevention resource centers. These centers provide a centralized information and distribution service within their states. Each state RADAR Network Center and its Coordinator is chosen by the Director of the state's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Agency. There are also RADAR Network Centers in American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

- Specialty RADAR Network Centers provide specific areas of expertise in substance abuse prevention. They are selected by CSAP to fill information gaps in the RADAR Network. They have a national or international focus and include, for example, expertise in the needs of ethnic populations, persons with disabilities, rural populations, substance abuse libraries, substance abuse research, workplace issues, and schools, including colleges and universities. Specialty Centers can also designate Specialty Associate Centers to provide connections between the national organizations and the communities they serve.

- Associate Centers are the Network's fastest growing component. There are over 600 Associate RADAR Network Centers, which enhance the RADAR Network's ability to disseminate information locally. Associate Centers are affiliated with either a State or a Specialty Center. These Centers include community-based organizations and task forces, prevention programs, and parent groups. Associate members affiliated with State Centers represent the State Centers' connections to their local communities. CSAP and the State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Agencies work together in designating State RADAR Network Associate members. Specialty Center Associates represent other organizations that work closely with the Specialty Centers and share their expertise. Associate members affiliated with a Specialty Center enhance their ability to disseminate information and represent expertise at the local level.

- International RADAR Network Centers are organizations that—within their own countries—make substantial contributions to the prevention of substance abuse problems. They work with communities and intermediary agencies that address populations at high risk. They maintain a collection of substance abuse prevention resources and are willing to assist other organizations within their own countries. In addition, they are willing to exchange information from their countries with CSAP so that it can be shared through the Network.

How can I access this resource outside of Nevada?

To learn the location of the nearest RADAR Network Center, or for other information about CSAP's RADAR Network, write, send an e-mail message, or call:

SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information

Attn: RADAR Network Manager

P.O. Box 2345

Rockville, Maryland 20847-2345

Telephone: (301) 468-2600

Toll-free in the U.S.: (800) 729-6686

TDD: (800) 487-4889

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information Web site: <http://www.health.org>

OR to access information within Nevada, Please call:

Nevada RADAR State Center & Nevada Prevention Resource Center

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